

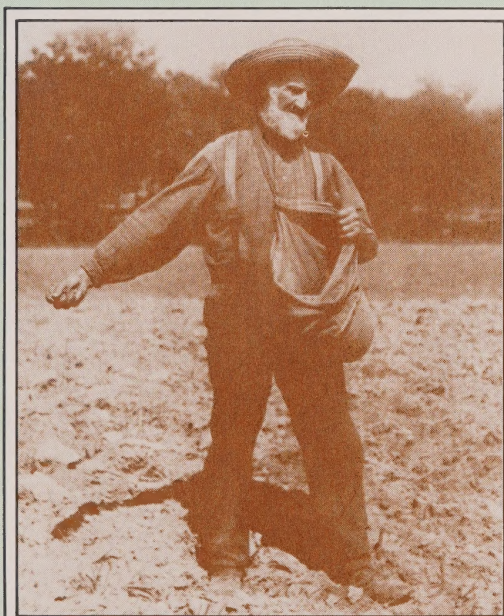
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# One Hundred Years of Achievement

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BY ONTARIO'S  
FOOD PRODUCERS



ONTARIO MINISTRY OF  
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

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## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

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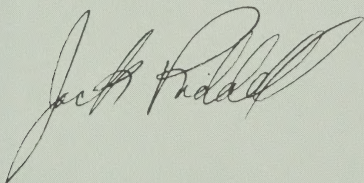
It is a great honor for me to be Minister of Agriculture and Food as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ministry.

During 1988, we are paying tribute to the achievements of the agri-food industry during the past 100 years.

In that time, agriculture has moved from a labor-intensive activity that fed some 2 million Ontarians in 1888 to today's highly technical business that feeds more than 9 million of us — and exports products to feed people in scores of other countries.

This ministry can take pride in the fact that it has played an important role in these achievements. It has helped farmers produce more and better quality foods through research, technical advice, education, marketing assistance, establishing quality standards and financial incentives.

During 1988, we in the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food salute the thousands of men and women of yesterday and today who work for all Ontarians to bring us one of life's most essential elements — our food.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Riddell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "R".

—Jack Riddell  
Minister of Agriculture and Food



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## INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) was established as a separate government department — the Department of Agriculture — in 1888.

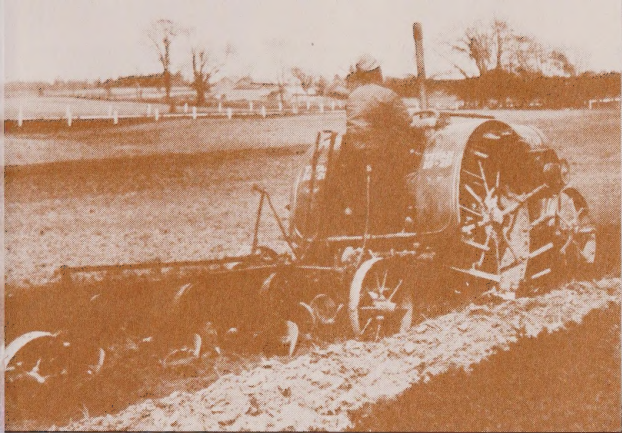
In that year, Ontario was largely rural with two-thirds of the population engaged directly in farming. Today, farmers represent only three per cent of the population.

So it's important that the ministry's centennial should help make all Ontarians aware of the role the agri-food sector plays in the economic and social life of the province in 1988.

This booklet pays tribute to agriculture's achievements during the past 100 years — and the ministry's contribution to those achievements.



A turn-of-the-century plowman earns a respite.



Early tractors ran on steel wheels.

## THE BEGINNINGS

The provincial government encouraged agriculture from the very early years. Legislation in the 1830s, for example, granted financial support to agricultural societies and their annual fairs.

A Board of Agriculture was formed in 1850 to compile statistics and conduct the census. The board's duties grew over the years as it took on the promotion of new technology and of raising livestock.

As the result of a commission established in 1880 to look at the state of food production in the province, the importance of the growing industry was recognized. Agriculture was separated from other branches of government activity in 1888 and made the sole responsibility of one minister.



## CHARLES A. DRURY

Ontario's first Minister of Agriculture was sworn in on May 1, 1888.

Accepting the nomination as agriculture minister was risky back then.

Charles Drury (MPP Simcoe East) had to immediately resign his Legislature seat to stand for re-election. In those days a Cabinet appointment had to be approved by the voters. Fortunately, Drury won by acclamation.

Born at Crown Hill, near Barrie, Drury farmed 400 acres with his brother. He served as minister until 1890.

His son, Ernest C. Drury, was Premier of Ontario from 1919 to 1923.



In 1900, haying was back-breaking work.

Modern haying is a mechanized operation.





It took a crew of six to harvest corn in 1908.



Today, harvesting corn takes one man, three machines.

## ARCHIBALD BLUE

The department's first deputy minister came to the public service after careers in teaching and journalism (*Toronto Globe*).

A native of Kent county, Archibald Blue served as deputy minister from 1888-1891. He later moved to Ottawa as chief census commissioner for Canada.

Blue had a staff of 35 to manage. By 19th century standards, this was large—the Department of Agriculture was among the largest in government. Its budget, in 1889, was \$24,500...out of a total Ontario government budget of \$212,145.



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## THE PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE IN ONTARIO

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Keeping pace with the needs of a population that's grown from 2 million to 9.3 million is a challenge. Ontario farmers have met that challenge over the past 100 years with innovation and excellence.

### THEN

Farming technology in 1888 was boosting productivity. The steam engine, improved threshing machines, tile drainage to bring new fields under cultivation, artificial fertilizers, wire fencing, and windmills to pump water enabled each farmer to feed about 10 other people in Ontario's growing cities and towns.

At the same time, farm women were also benefiting from "new" technology which had now become affordable for the average farm family — cast iron cooking stoves and sewing machines provided measures of relief from daily drudgery.

The progressive tendency of the time was to specialize in livestock production. So, in addition to selling a few crops for cash, farmers grew the crops required to feed livestock — oats, peas, corn (in the south-west) and root crops such as mangels.

Nearly every farmer had a plow, seed drill, cultivator, hay mower, hay rake and a binder or an old reaper in the barn. At harvest time, farmers would hire someone to come in with a steam engine and thresher to thresh the crop.



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Until the tractor came into widespread use, plowing was known as the “horse killer.” Each farm usually had three teams of horses—a light team to pull a wagon or buggy into town and two heavy teams for plowing or harrowing. But one team would last for only half the day. The second team would be harnessed for the other half.

Farming in the 1880s was hard work, but rural Ontario had advanced beyond the subsistence level of earlier years. Agriculture had become the basis of a thriving provincial economy.

## NOW

Today, highly mechanized farm equipment, better transportation, improved feeds and cropping methods have improved the nature of work and life around the farm.

Science and technology have helped farmers produce more than their ancestors ever dreamed possible. But quantity isn't everything. Research, much of it funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, has helped ensure variety and quality, making Ontario's agricultural products among the best in the world.

Ontario's 73,000 farms export close to \$2 billion of food and agricultural products annually, as well as supplying a hungry domestic market.

Modern farm homes fully enjoy the benefits of technology and the computer is appearing more and more frequently in farm offices to assist in managing the operation.



Mechanized seeders now help ease the task of planting.

Agricultural representatives and ministry specialists have played a key role over the years in encouraging the use of new technology and new farming methods.

But farming still has its challenges and changes — from the uncertainties of the weather to shifting international trade patterns. The nature of farm life in Ontario as a family enterprise still requires commitment from both men and women alike.

From farms to processing plants, trucking companies, supermarkets and restaurants, the agri-food business is a complex \$15-billion industry that employs one in five Ontarians.

Farming is the cornerstone of Ontario's food system — one of the finest in the world.



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## ACHIEVEMENTS 1888 — 1988

A sampling of important developments in Ontario's agriculture and food industry.

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**1888** — The Department of Agriculture is established in the "Old Parliament Buildings," located on 10 acres of land bounded by Front, Simcoe, Wellington and John Streets, Toronto.

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**1891** — One hundredth anniversary of the first agricultural fair in Ontario — at Newark — (Niagara-on-the-Lake).

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**1893** — Department of Agriculture office moves from its original site to the new main Parliament Buildings at Queen's Park in Toronto.

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**1895** — The first farmers' market in Ontario — at Chatham — celebrates its 100th birthday.

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**1897** — The first Women's Institute — dedicated to the improvement of farm life for the family and in particular for women — is organized at Stoney Creek, led by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless.

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**1903** — St. Lawrence Market in Toronto marks 100 years of operation.

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**1904** — First milk powder produced in Canada is made at Brownsville, Ont.

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**1905** — W.H. Fisher of Ayton, Ont. is the first to advertise and ship baby chicks. The first shipment of 15 went to Glace Bay, Nova Scotia.

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**1906** — The Vineland Horticultural Experimental Station — where hundreds of improved varieties of fruits and vegetables have originated — is founded on a site between Grimsby and St. Catharines.

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In 1916, apples were packed in stout barrels.

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**1907** — First Agricultural Representatives are appointed jointly with the Department of Education to teach agriculture in the schools and provide farmers with the support of research and government programs.

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**1914** — First local Junior Farmers Associations are established in Durham, Middlesex, Peel and York for young men aged 19 to 24.

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**1915** — First sponsored tractor plowing demonstration in Canada at the International Plowing Match held at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Ont. on November 5th — featuring four tractors.

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**1918** — Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology established near Ottawa.

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**1922** — First Royal Agricultural Winter Fair opens in Toronto, November 22 to 29.

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**1926** — First recorded use of combine-thresher in Ontario.

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**1927** — System of Agricultural Representatives expands from six counties to locations in all 54 Ontario counties and districts.

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**1930** — Pablum — the baby food used all over the world — is developed by three Toronto doctors at Sick Children's Hospital.

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**1936** — The Ontario Agricultural Conference is organized...to become the Ontario Chamber of Agriculture and finally the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the province's largest general farm organization.

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**1938** — Province's oldest marketing board is established — the Ontario Asparagus Growers' Marketing Board.

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**1938** — The farm machine that revolutionized wheat farming around the world — the self-propelled combine — is developed at the Massey-Harris factory in Toronto.

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**1942** — During World War II, "Farmerettes" — women from cities and towns — volunteer to help with the harvest and other farm chores through the Ontario Farm Service Force.

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— Archives of Ontario

"Farmerettes" from town helped with the wartime harvest in 1943.

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1951 — Western Ontario Agricultural School established at site of Ridgetown's Western Ontario Experimental Farm.

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1954 — Ontario Food Terminal opens to bring farmers together with food retailers and restaurateurs.

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1962 — Ontario Veterinary College celebrates its centennial, having been established at University of Toronto, and moving to Guelph in 1922.

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1967 — The department acquires responsibility for food, becoming the Ontario Department of Agriculture and Food.

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1967 — Centralia College of Agricultural Technology opens north of London, Ont.

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1970 — New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology is established in Northern Ontario's clay belt, 160 km north of North Bay.

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1972 — Ontario government changes 'department' to 'ministry', the name of the agricultural department becomes Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF).

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1974 — Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) in Guelph celebrates its centennial.

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1979 — 801 Bay St. becomes headquarters of OMAF after 11 years at 1200 Bay.

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1981 — Alfred College of Agriculture and Food Technology for francophone students is established east of Ottawa.

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1987 — Government announces OMAF headquarters to move to Guelph in 1991/92.

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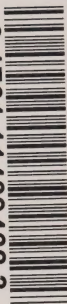


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## DID YOU KNOW?

- Did you know that some Kentucky breeders prefer to feed their fine horses a special hay from Ontario. The province also ships Ontario timothy to many racetrack stables in Florida.
  - Ontario has more than 6,000 Century Farms. Each of them has operated continuously for 100 years or more under the same family name.
  - Ontario exports food products to countries that made those foods famous in the first place. Our wine goes to France, our cheddar to England and our ginseng root and soybeans to the Orient.
  - Ontario-produced pasta has won international acclaim. Our pasta has earned awards in London, Vienna, Amsterdam and Paris, winning the gold medal four years in a row from the prestigious "Monde Selection" competition.
  - The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food spends about \$35 million annually on research to help farmers produce new and better crops and food products.
  - The average dairy cow produces in excess of five tons of milk annually. That's more than double the 1941 production of 4,800 pounds per cow.
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Ministry of  
Agriculture  
and Food

**ONTARIO**

Jack Riddell, Minister